

opportunity allowed, on a new and greatly improved edition of my 'Nomenclature of Colors' (1886). I am happy to be able to announce that, after twenty years of necessarily intermittent labour, this most difficult and tedious task has at last been accomplished, and that arrangements have been made for its early publication, the Plates being already in process of reproduction.

The new work will present nearly 1350 colours, arranged scientifically and reproduced by a method which guarantees a faithful copy of the originals as to hue and tone—in fact, absolute uniformity throughout the entire edition,—and at the same time as great a degree of permanency as is possible with pigments now known to colourists. The standard of the original work is, of course, retained and as many additional colours are named as practicable. Obviously it is impossible to provide names for all of so large a number of colours; but those which are left unnamed may be easily designated by an exceedingly simple system of symbols, as may also the intermediates, both as to hue and tone. This renders the work practically equivalent to the actual presentation of more than 5300 named or otherwise designable colour-samples. In short, the work has been so carefully planned and executed that I have no doubt as to its adequacy to meet all the demands of naturalists and others who have use for a comprehensive colour-nomenclature and standards. The new edition will be of the same size (except for a slightly greater thickness, there being 64 plates instead of the 10 of the old edition), and will be sold for about \$5.00 net, or only \$1.00 more than the original work.

I am, Sirs, yours &c.,

ROBERT RIDGWAY.

Washington,
Sept. 9th, 1909.

The B. O. U. Expedition for the Exploration of Central New Guinea.—Mr. Walter Goodfellow, the Leader of the proposed "B. O. U. Jubilee Exploration of the Charles-Louis Mountains," returned to England on Aug. 6th with a good collection of living Paradise-birds, amongst which were

examples of *Paradisornis rudolphi*, *Astrarchia stephaniae*, and *Epimachus meyeri*, and is now making preparations for the new Expedition to the Charles-Louis Mountains. He hopes to be able to start about the end of this month, and to be landed on the coast of New Guinea early in the following January. He will be accompanied by Captain Rawling as Surveyor and Dr. Eric Marshall as Assistant-Surveyor (who are delegated by the Royal Geographical Society to map this utterly unexplored country), Mr. A. F. R. Wollaston as Medical Officer and Botanist, and two taxidermists, Mr. G. C. Shortridge and Mr. W. Stalker.

The Committee of the B. O. U., who superintend the arrangements for the Expedition, consist of Dr. F. D. Godman (Chairman), Mr. W. R. Ogilvie-Grant (Secretary), Mr. C. E. Fagan (Treasurer), Dr. Sclater, and Mr. Meade-Waldo.

It will be recollected that the scheme of the Expedition was originally brought before the Special Jubilee Meeting of the B. O. U., held on December 9th, 1908, by Mr. Ogilvie-Grant, and unanimously approved (see 'The Ibis,' 1908, Jubilee Supplement, p. 12 ; also Mr. Ogilvie-Grant's appeal for assistance, 'Ibis,' 1909, p. 194).

News of Mr. Boyd Alexander.—After finishing his work in the islands of the Gulf of Guinea and on the Peak of Kamerun (see above, p. 564), Mr. Alexander went to the Maninguba Range in the interior of Kamerun, where he stayed for two weeks. In a letter to his father, which we have been kindly allowed to see, this is described as a very interesting mountain with two crater-lakes on its summit. His collecting work being now finished, Mr. Alexander determined to visit Lake Tchad again, "to see what it looks like in the rainy season," and went straight across country to Ibi, on the Benué. Thence he took one of the Niger Company's steamers up to Yola, where his letter was dated on August the 20th. A few days after that he was intending to start on a fifteen days' march to Maifoni, and thence to prosecute his tour round Lake Tchad. After that

plan has been successfully carried out, we trust that the indefatigable explorer will come home, and devote his attention to his fine collection of Birds, the result of his two great journeys, which await his arrival at South Kensington.

The proposed Introduction of the "American Robin" into England.—We believe that we are in agreement with the wishes of the large majority of ornithologists when we express a hope that the attempts to introduce the "American Robin" (*Turdus migratorius*) into this country will not succeed. We agree with the Editor of 'Nature' (Aug. 25th, 1909) that the experiment is "of a very interesting character," and that the bird in question is "cheery," its song "kill 'em, cure 'em, give 'em physic" being agreeable, except, perhaps, to the vendors of patent medicines. But our English gardens are fortunately the habitation of several melodious species of Thrush, and we should be much grieved if our Song-Thrushes and Blackbirds were displaced by intruders from other parts of the world. We know well what has happened in many parts of the globe where similar "interesting experiments" have succeeded, and where English Sparrows and Indian Mynahs have exterminated the native birds. According to our contemporary, seventeen American Robins turned out this spring near Guildford mated immediately, and commenced nest-building almost at once, and "now number between forty and fifty." Fears are entertained, it is said, that these birds may have retained their "migratory instinct," and on the approach of winter will leave England and become "hopelessly dispersed." This, in our opinion, would be the best thing that could happen. We prefer our *Turdus merula* and *T. musicus* to *T. migratorius*, in spite of its "cheeriness."

The Auckland Museum, New Zealand.—Mr. Lewis T. Griffin, who was for about two years (under Mr. W. L. Sclater) taxidermist at the Cape Museum, and afterwards in a similar situation at the Transvaal Museum, Pretoria,

has recently moved to New Zealand, where he has become first assistant to Mr. Thomas Cheeseman, the Curator of the Auckland Museum. In a letter recently received by Mr. W. L. Sclater, Griffin gives a good account of this Museum, which is well-known for its rich Maori Collections, supposed to be the finest in the world. The Museum-building contains five exhibition-halls, besides the usual offices, and an extensive library. The main hall is devoted to the foreign Zoological Collections, and holds a series of groups in large cases, called the "African Group," the "Arctic Group," and so on, shewing the characteristic animals of the different Regions. The series of birds is now being re-mounted and is receiving fresh additions. Mr. Griffin describes Auckland as a lovely place with a climate like that of Cape Town, and is evidently much pleased with his new post, for which we believe he is well fitted. He will be pleased to attend to any special requirements of naturalists.

Bird-marking Experiments in England.—Mr. H. F. Witherby, the Editor of 'British Birds,' is inaugurating, in connection with his magazine, a scheme for marking birds in this country in a similar way to that employed at the German Bird-Observatory at Rossitten. It is hoped by this means to gain a more exact idea of the movements of individual birds than has ever been possible by any other method; and this should not only throw light upon the more general aspects of migration, but should tell us a great deal that is at present obscure with regard to particular points. For example, while we may know the general distribution of a species in winter and summer, we do not know the extent of the migration of individual birds; or, indeed, whether in such cases as the Song-Thrush and Robin, certain individuals ever migrate at all. The movements of sea-birds are very little understood, and much might be learned from marking a large number. This plan might

also tell us what influence age has upon plumage, &c.; where a young bird, the birthplace of which is known, breeds; whether individuals return to previous nesting-haunts, and whether pairs come together again in successive breeding-seasons.

Many of the readers of 'British Birds' are taking the matter up, and it is expected that a large number of birds of all kinds will be "ringed." The rings are extremely light and do not in any way interfere with the bird's power of flight: all are stamped "Witherby, High Holborn, London," and bear a distinctive number, which in the smaller sizes is stamped inside the ring. It is hoped that anyone into whose hands a bird so marked should fall will send the bird and the ring (or, if this be not possible, then the particulars of the number on the ring, the species of bird, and the locality and date of capture) to the address above given.

The Lake-N'gami Expedition.—Two members of the Ruwenzori Expedition (Mr. R. B. Woosnam and the Hon. Gerald Legge) are again in Africa, exploring the little-known country round Lake N'gami. Information of their safe arrival on the 27th of June last at the shores of that lake has been received in a long and interesting letter written to Mr. Ogilvie-Grant, but they had a difficult task to get there. They were twice obliged to cross stretches of 120 miles without water, and the oxen and horses were forced to live entirely on sama, a little white water-melon, which was also boiled down in order to cook meat and to make tea. Leaving the railway at Vryburg, in Bechuana-land, they travelled due north through the heart of the Kalahari Desert. Crossing the Molopo River in April, they found it still held a little water, but were told that it would be entirely dry by August. Thence they struck slightly east, to a place called Kakia, just north of the 25th parallel, and passing Kokong, Okwa, and Ghansis, reached Tsau (or Tsao) on

the Okovanga River. After being many months in the dry sandy bush-veldt they arrived quite suddenly in N'gami-land, with its wealth of tall papyrus, fine palms, and evergreen trees. The silent wastes of the desert were replaced by teeming masses of birds and animal life of all sorts. Lake there was none, at least not in the ordinary sense of the word, but there lay before them a vast swamp bordered on the south by the dry Kalahari, and on the north by a most amazing and intricate system of rivers and a vast expanse of marshes, which are dry in summer, but are inundated with water from the north during the winter. The travellers are busy in collecting birds, mammals, and other animals, and hope to be able to get a complete series of the fishes of Lake N'gami, which are very little known, and are specially required at South Kensington.

A new Fossil Bird from the Lower Pliocene.—The last issued Part of the 'Proceedings' of the Zoological Society of London (1909, p. 368) contains an account by Mr. W. P. Pycraft of the fossilized remains of a small Passerine bird from Gabbro, near Leghorn. After a detailed description Mr. Pycraft comes to the conclusion that the remains are those of a Pipit (*Anthus*), and resemble most nearly those of the living species known as Berthelot's Pipit (*Anthus bertheloti*) of Madeira.

Assuming that this is correct, Mr. Pycraft proposes to adopt the name of the discoverer—Dr. Bosniaski—as the specific name of this species.

Anthus bosniaskii was obtained by Dr. Bosniaski from the Lower Pliocene of Gabbro, near Leghorn, a deposit which as yielded many fossils and which is particularly rich in fish-remains.

The only other remains of Passerine birds from the Lower Pliocene are stated to be a few fragments, representing the genera *Corvus* and *Turdus*, from Rousillon, Perpignan.